

# Guidance and Counselling: A Tool for Enhancing Performance in Senior Secondary Schools of Kebbi State, Nigeria

<sup>1</sup>Dr. B. U. Aliero, <sup>1</sup>Dr. H. S. Aliero, <sup>2</sup>Dr. S. Y. Tsagem

<sup>1</sup>Department of Education, Kebbi State University of Science and Technology Aliero, P. M. B. 1144, Kebbi State - Nigeria

<sup>2</sup>Department of Educational Foundations, Usmanu Danfodiyo University, P. M. B. 2346, Sokoto - Nigeria

**Abstract:-** This research explores the impact of counselling services in improving academic performances as perceived by teachers and students in senior secondary schools of Kebbi State, Nigeria. For the study, a sample of 317 students and 183 teachers (N = 500) from public secondary schools in Kebbi state were selected from a population of N = 107, 289. The study utilizes the descriptive design and an instrument developed by the researchers was used in collecting data. Formulated hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. Using independent-samples t-test statistic, results indicated that both the teachers and the students affirmed that counselling services are very important in improving students' academic performance.

**Keywords:-** Counselling, Enhancing, Performance, School, Student, Kebbi.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Guidance and counselling are series of developmental processes embark upon to assist an individual to understand, accept and utilize his or her abilities and capabilities maximally, make informed decisions and solve his or her own problems by himself or herself. Thus, it is specialized services geared towards assisting persons to maximally utilize their competencies and capabilities by understanding their abilities and overcoming any negative feeling that they may entertain towards their achievements. Guidance and counselling when delivered adequately would lead to individuals understanding their strengths and weaknesses and exploiting same to make concrete decisions that would ensure a meaningful, satisfying and beneficial life.

Guidance and counselling touch all aspects of life in the society and as such is found very relevant, helpful and of utmost importance to the school process. The school guidance process is of importance to both the students and the staff; and also plays important role in school-parent-community relationships. Consequently, Salawu and Abdulkadir (2011) defined guidance and counselling as a practice primarily concerned with how to assist the individual client to understand himself, the world around him, and so be able to live a normal and well-adjusted life. In other words, it could be regarded as a learning – oriented process, which occurs usually in an interactive relationship with the aim of helping a person learn more about the self and to use such understanding to enable the person to become an effective member of society.

Guidance plays a vital role in preventing educational, personal, social, mental, emotional and other similar problems among secondary school students. Guidance and counselling in school setting involves schools' counsellors working in conjunction with teachers, parents and other school personnel as well as community agencies Abubakar, Malan and Abdulaziz (2021). They further provided some of the fundamental reasons for the introduction of guidance and counselling services in schools by noting that generally, students are faced with appropriate vocational choices, emotional inadequacy and personal-social problems. To overcome all forms of life inadequacies, guidance and counselling provides appropriate assistance to students to better understand and accept themselves, their personalities, endowment, their strengths and weaknesses, their attitudes and worth as unique individuals. This is as a result that school counsellors are key members of guidance and students' services teams and also because a counsellor is an important person in school guidance programme (Akinleye, 2007).

It is with all these put into consideration that the Federal Government of Nigeria's National Policy on Education (NPE, 2014) and the National Policy on Counselling (FME, 2018) stresses the need for guidance and counselling programme to be put in place at all educational levels. In this regard, Batagarawa & Dan Inna (2021) observe that guidance and counselling services is a very important programme for the attainment of the objectives of education delivery at all levels in Nigeria.

Since all learning is geared towards positive outcomes and also since such outcome is expected to meet certain measurement criteria, then the level of performance of students is always of concern to people saddled with the responsibility of educating these members of the society because "student academic performance has always been a topic of interest to educators" (Crosnoe, Johnson & Elder, 2004). Such concern led to the realization that students' performance is not how it is desired; that the performance is not up to what is expected due to numerous issues and problems discerned.

Ways, avenues and means of resolving the issue has been proposed, some of which worked while others didn't provide the desired solutions. This study is an attempt to contribute to the enhancement of such performance in secondary schools by utilizing the contributions guidance and counselling would provide.

## II. GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING: THE CONCEPTS

Guidance and Counselling practice is primarily concerned with how to assist the individual client to understand himself, the world around him, and so be able to live a normal and well-adjusted life. In other words, it could be regarded as a learning – oriented process, which occurs usually in an interactive relationship with the aim of helping a person learn more about the self and to use such understanding to enable the person to become an effective member of society.

Guidance and counselling are both involved with the development of an individual. Both help an individual in facing and solving the problems and moving towards self-realization and self-empowerment. However, despite the fact that both guidance and counselling are aimed at helping an individual in finding solution to his problems, there are some differences between the two, especially in terms of how the processes are carried out and implemented (Sood, 2016). Thus, though guidance and counselling may seem synonymous but the two terms are different though one was sub-summed into the other. While guidance may be seen as a process of helping someone to achieve self-direction necessary to make the maximum adjustment to school, home and the community, counselling is seen as an interaction process that facilitates meaningful understanding of self and environment and results in the establishment and/or clarification of goals and values for future behaviour (Anwana; Shertzer and Stone as cited in Yahaya, 2009).

Specifically, guidance is a process designed to help one individual or group of individuals, to prepare, to enter upon and progress in course of action pertaining to the educational, vocational, recreational and community services in making necessary adjustment to environment whether that be within the school or outside it. Accordingly, Biswalo (1996) saw guidance as the process of helping an individual to gain self-understanding, self-direction, and to adjust maximally to the environment. This help is designed to assist people in deciding where they want to go, what they want to do, how to get to their destination, and how to solve problems arising in their life (Tsagem, 2018).

Thus, it is a process of helping individuals through their own efforts to discover and develop their potentialities both for personal happiness and social usefulness. Furthermore, it is an umbrella term embracing counselling services, appraisal services, information services, referral services, research and evaluation services, all of which help an individual to grow in self-understanding and consequently in making wise decisions for best adjustment. Thus, guidance refers to a broad area of educational activities and services aimed at assisting individuals in making and carrying out adequate plans and achieving satisfactory adjustment.

Moreover, Arbukle *et al.* (1996) viewed guidance both as a concept as well as a process; as a concept guidance is concerned with the optimal development of the individual and as a process guidance helps the individual in self-

understanding (understanding one's strengths & limitations) and in self-direction (ability to solve problems, make choices and one's own decisions). In a nutshell, guidance referred to an umbrella that covers all the means whereby an institution identifies and responds to the individual needs of pupils or students no matter the nature of the need and no matter its source; thereby helping the child to develop to his maximum potential (Ipaye as cited in Yahaya, 2009). Thus, guidance Counselling is a dynamic and purposeful relationship between two people who approach a mutually defined problem, with mutual consideration of each other to the end that the younger or less mature or more troubled of the two is aided to a self-determined resolution to problem. Thus, it is a process in which the counselor give appropriate and correct information to the individual, suggests and offers several appropriate courses of action and options and helps to clarify needs, feelings or motivations so that appropriate decision could be made. Thus, Action Health Incorporated (2002) referred to counselling as a client-oriented interactive communication process in which one helps others make free informed decisions about their personal behaviour and provide support to sustain that behaviour. Furthermore, Mallum (2000) saw counselling as that process which takes place in a one-to-one relationship between an individual troubled by problems with which he cannot cope with alone, and a professional worker whose training and experiences have qualified him to help others reach solution to various types of personal difficulties. Counselling was also viewed by Okoye (2010) as an interactional relationship designed to facilitate the personal development of information leading to effective decision making and awareness of the self.

When viewed in educational setting, counselling could therefore be regarded as the type of counselling which is being applied within the educational setting to help the pupils not only to solve their educational problems but also to be equipped with skills to effect satisfactory self-solutions to their educational problems. Such self-solution is geared towards meeting the demands, expectations, norms and morals of the society within which the individual operates (Bashar, 2020). Accordingly, Bulus (1990) sees counselling as an open ended, face to face, problem solving situation within which a student with professional assistance, can focus and begin to solve a problem or problems.

### ➤ *Guidance and Counseling in Secondary Schools*

Within the school system, guidance is the programme of services to individual students based on the need of each student, and understanding of his immediate environment, teachers, peers, parents and people generally and the effect of their influences on the students. The term "guidance" was usually used as an umbrella term that covers all the means whereby an institution identifies and responds to the individual needs of the pupils or students no matter the needs and no matter its sources. Counselling provides an atmosphere within which one person (the counsellor) can provide help to another person or group of persons (the counsellee(s)). The help does not connote and should not be taken to mean handing decisions, or a plan package down to the person who needs the help. Rather, it means helping with

a view of facilitating his getting into grips with the issue at hand.

As effective teaching and learning process is required in school settings, so also guidance and counselling in as much as psychologically healthy, academically sound, well focus and highly oriented individuals are desired as products. Guidance and counselling services are highly recommended in order to have a well-balance relationship between the students, staff, parents, community and the system in general. Thus, Abubakar, Malan and Abdulaziz (2021) points that along with instruction, guidance and counselling as a service in schools is an integral part of educational system. It is a programme for secondary school students designed to address the physical, emotional, social, vocational and academic difficulties of adolescent students. it is important to note that every school needs to have a comprehensive school counselling programme in order to promote students' successes.

Makinde, as cited in Yahaya, (2009) sees educational counselling as a process of rendering services to pupils who need assistance in making decisions about certain important aspect of their education such as choice of courses and studies, decision on interest and ability, choices of college and high school. Educational counselling increases pupil's knowledge of educational opportunities. Thus, Onyilo and Shamo (2020) pointed out that counsellors collaborate with stakeholders such as parents and guardians, teachers, administrators and community leaders to create learning environments that promote educational equity and success for every student. It is crucial for educational leaders to recognize the impact and service school counsellors have in every school community as stakeholders embrace engaging educational environments that support pathways to sustainable and rewarding educational opportunities.

Furthermore, Egbo (2013) defined guidance and counselling as a learning process in which a counsellor helps an individual or individuals learn, understand themselves and their environment and be in a position to choose the right type of behaviours that will help them develop, grow, progress, ascend, mature and step up, educationally, vocationally and socio-personally. Likewise, Hong Kong Education Department (2012) define guidance and counselling as a cluster of services aimed at helping a person to understand "self" and to take appropriate steps in educational, occupational and life planning generally. While, Ndum and Onukwugha (2013) saw guidance and counselling as a family name for all the helping service within the general educational and community systems. In the same vein, Bobga (2016) defined guidance and counselling as cognitive educational services (within or outside the school system), that help people understand themselves, provided the client, reveals accurate, reliable, and valid information about him/herself and his/her environment.

Moreover, the objectives of the guidance and counselling programme in educational institutions are to provide services which will meet certain needs in the growth and development of young people, namely:

1. **Personal development and adjustment.** Self-understanding: the discovery of potentialities, special aptitudes, and interests. Recognition and development of favourable attitudes and habits, and the elimination of undesirable traits
2. **Educational progress and adjustment.** Selection of appropriate courses in line with individual needs, interests, abilities, and circumstances. Choice of the right type of advanced training, college or otherwise
3. **Occupational development and adjustment.** Information on occupational opportunities and trends. Knowledge of occupational fields toward which individual aptitudes and interests may best be directed. Help in finding suitable employment.
4. **Follow-up after leaving school.** Research with respect to needs of pupils and the effectiveness of the secondary school curriculum.
5. Evaluation of the guidance programme.

➤ *Statement of the Research Problem*

Students in secondary schools have their own peculiar problems; they have the problems of "growth" in social development. Thus, they need help in order to adjust to adult society. Some of them will be emancipated from their family ties and thus adjustments have to be made to cater for their social, emotional, psychological, moral, academic as well as vocational developments. They should be encouraged to develop appreciation for philosophy of life, and sensible approaches as to how their leisure time will be wisely used.

Most senior secondary schools in the state do not have active guidance and counselling programmes for student and as such the student undertake courses without proper guidance. Many times, some parents, in their pride, imposed courses on their children not minding the affective, cognitive, or/and psychomotor abilities of their children and wards even though guidance and counseling make individuals aware of their basic personal prerequisites, abilities, assets, liabilities and potentialities. Thus, the importance of guidance and counseling in Kebbi state secondary schools has not been exploited and it is based on this assertion that this research gears to investigate the many advantages Kebbi state secondary schools stand to gain from effective guidance and counselling programmes. In view of the above this research will be conducted to assist the teachers and students in Kebbi state secondary schools better understand the importance of guidance and counselling.

➤ *Objectives of the Study*

The general objective of this study was to teach the importance of guidance and counselling to the teachers and students in senior secondary schools of Kebbi state but, specifically to:

1. To examine teachers' view on the impact of counselling services in improving students' academic performances in senior secondary school in Kebbi State Nigeria.
2. To ascertain the significance of counselling services in improving students' academic performances in Kebbi state senior secondary school students.
3. To ascertain both the teachers' and the students' views on how counselling services improve students' academic

performances in senior secondary schools in Kebbi state, Nigeria.

➤ *Research Questions*

1. What is the view of the teachers on the impact of counselling services in improving students’ academic performances in senior secondary schools of Kebbi state?
2. What is the view of the students on the impact of counselling services in improving their academic performances in senior secondary schools of Kebbi state?
3. What is the view of both the teachers and the students on how counselling services improve students’ academic performance in senior secondary schools of Kebbi state?

➤ *Research Hypothesis*

- There is no significant difference in the perception of male and female teachers on the impact of counselling services on students’ academic performance in secondary schools in Kebbi state.
- There is no significant difference in the perception of female and male students on the impact of counselling services on their academic performance in secondary schools in Kebbi state.
- There is no significant difference in the perception of teachers and students in the ways counselling services improve academic performances in secondary schools in Kebbi state.

➤ *Theoretical Interpretive Context*

The study was framed upon Abraham Maslow’s (1943) Motivational theory whose main point emphasized the positive potential of human beings (Schacter, Gilbert & Wegner, 2012), on how actions are motivated in order to achieve certain needs and that emphasizes that learners, at all levels, need positive reinforcement to aspire and achieve their goals and perform better. The theory is very relevant and significant in the provision of counselling services because it strengthens learners to engage in meaningful behavior change that can make them achieve their learning objectives and serves as a motivation factor.

➤ *Research Design*

The design adopted for this research was descriptive survey. This design enabled the researchers to examine the influence of guidance and counselling to the academic performance of the students in the area of study.

➤ *Population, Sample and Sampling Procedure*

The study consisted of all the one hundred and two thousand eight hundred and eighty (102, 880) students and the four thousand four hundred and nine (4, 409) teachers in the three hundred and twenty-nine (329) secondary schools in the state (Research and Statistics Department, Kebbi State Ministry of Education, 2022). The study was delimited to only public secondary schools.

Purposeful sampling was used to select twenty-one secondary schools across the state i.e., one school from each Local Government Area (LGA). Furthermore, Research Advisors Table (2006) for determining sample size was used in drawing a sample of five hundred (500) participants for the

study, this constituted a 95% confidence interval with a Margin of Error of about  $\pm 4.37\%$ . Moreover, random sampling technique was used to select 317 (63.4%) students and 183 (36.6%) teachers.

➤ *Instrumentation*

The main instrument for data collection for this study was developed by the researchers titled Guidance and Counselling Perception Questionnaire (GCoP-Q). The instrument has sections A, B and C; while section A sought for the demographic data of the respondents, section B contains fifteen (15) 4-points Likert-type items on the perceived importance of counselling services in secondary schools and section C contains fifteen (15) 4-points Likert-type items on how to improve counselling services in secondary schools. The items were responded to from Strongly Agree through to Strongly Disagree and thus for each of sections B and C, the lowest score would be 15 and the highest would be 60.

The content and face validities of the instrument was ascertained by the independent judgements of experts in the Department of Educational Foundations, UDU Sokoto and that of the Department of Education, KSUST Aliero. In order to determine the reliability of the instrument a test re-test was carried out with three weeks interval given between the first and second administration. Ten schools in different parts of Sokoto state were used; two from Tambuwal Education zone, two from Gwadabawa Education zone, four from Sokoto North Education zone and two from Tureta Education zone. Likewise, one hundred randomly selected students (ten from each school) were used to respond to the instrument. With the use of Pearson product moment correlation, reliability coefficient of 0.75 was obtained. This was considered high enough for use for the study.

➤ *Data Collection and Analysis*

The researchers used direct delivery techniques in the administration of the instrument for data collection. The researchers sought permission from the State Ministry of Education for the conduct of the study and also from the schools’ authorities for the use of their teachers, students and time. Furthermore, some of the teachers were used as research assistants in some of the schools visited.

To analyze the research hypotheses independent-samples t-test statistic was used. Likewise, to guide for the acceptance or rejection of the formulated hypotheses, 0.05 level of significance was used. Data analysis was conducted by the use of SPSS Version 20.0.

**III. RESULT PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS**

**Table 1:** Respondents’ Demographic Data

Respondents	Frequency	Percentage
Students	317	63.40
Teachers	183	36.60
<b>Total</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>100.00</b>
Students	Frequency	Percentage
Male	184	58.04
Female	133	41.96

<b>Total</b>	<b>317</b>	<b>100.00</b>
<b>Teachers</b>	Frequency	Percentage
Male	96	52.46
Female	87	47.54
<b>Total</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>100.00</b>

From table 1 it could be discerned that 317 (63.40%) students participated in the study while 183 (36.60%) teachers participated also. Furthermore, of the 317 students,

184 (58.04%) were males while 133 (41.96%) were females. Likewise, of the 183 teachers, 96 (52.46%) were males while 87 (47.54%) were females.

**H01:** *There is no significant difference in the perception of male and female teachers on the impact of counselling services on students' academic performance in secondary schools in Kebbi state.*

**Table 2:** Teachers' Perception on the Impact of Counselling Services on Academic Performance.

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-Cal	p-Value	Decision
Male	96	30.46	11.37	.125	.900	Rejected
Female	87	30.24	12.06			

Table 2 shows an independent-samples t-test indicating that scores for the male teachers ( $M = 30.46, SD = 11.37$ ) were not significantly higher from that of the female teachers ( $M = 30.24, SD = 12.06$ ),  $t(181) = .125, p = .900$ . This indicates that there was no difference in the perception of the male and female teachers on the impact of counselling services on the academic performance in the secondary schools. Therefore, H01 which stated that there is no significant difference in the perception of male and female

teachers on the impact of counselling services on students' academic performance in secondary schools in Kebbi state was not accepted.

**H02:** *There is no significant difference in the perception of female and male students on the impact of counselling services on their academic performance in secondary schools in Kebbi state.*

**Table 3:** Students' Perception on the Impact of Counselling Services on Academic Performance.

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-Cal	p-Value	Decision
Female	133	30.48	11.65	.227	.821	Rejected
Male	184	30.18	11.35			

Table 3 shows an independent-samples t-test indicating that scores for the female students ( $M = 30.48, SD = 11.65$ ) were not significantly higher from that of the male students ( $M = 30.18, SD = 11.35$ ),  $t(315) = .227, p = .821$ . This indicates that there was no difference in the perception of the female and male students on the impact of counselling services on their academic performances in the secondary schools. Therefore, H02 which stated that there is no significant difference in the perception of female and male

students on the impact of counselling services on their academic performances in secondary schools in Kebbi state was not accepted.

**H03:** *There is no significant difference in the perception of teachers and students in the ways counselling services improve academic performances in secondary schools in Kebbi state.*

**Table 4:** Teachers' and Students' Perceptions on the Ways Counselling Services Improve Academic Performances.

Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-Cal	p-Value	Decision
Teachers	183	30.36	11.67	.043	.966	Rejected
Students	317	30.31	11.46			

Table 4 shows an independent-samples t-test indicating that scores for the teachers ( $M = 30.36, SD = 11.67$ ) were not significantly higher from that of the students ( $M = 30.31, SD = 11.46$ ),  $t(498) = .043, p = .966$ . This indicates that there was no difference in the perception of the teachers and students on the ways counselling services improve academic performance in the secondary schools. Therefore, H03 which stated that there is no significant difference in the perception of teachers and students in the ways counselling services improve academic performances in secondary schools in Kebbi state was not accepted.

#### IV. DISCUSSION

The findings of the study indicate that neither the teachers nor the students have any diverse perception on the importance of counselling services in secondary schools in Kebbi state, likewise there was no difference between male and female respondents in that respect. Accordingly, the study's findings have aligned with many findings in portraying the importance of counselling services towards improvement of students' academic performance. Thus, one of the findings indicated that, irrespective of gender, teachers unanimously agreed that counselling services are very important in the improvement of students' academic

performance. Thus, teachers should work together with school counsellor to achieve that. Despite the tension that may occur sometimes between school counsellor and teachers, school counsellor and teachers should develop strong and supportive relationship. This is because teachers often look to counsellor to make their work with students and parents more effective. Thus, Herring and White (1995) pointed out that teachers provide counsellor with student referral and comprehensive profiles and observe that clearly, school counselling programmes are unsuccessful without the support and acceptance of teachers. Furthermore, Odhiambo (2014) lend credence to this finding by observing that guidance programme has a positive impact on the academic performance of students. This has also been supported by Renuka, Devaki, Madhanika and Saikumar (2013) who identified counselling service as having positive influence on the academic performance of students. Thus, the impact of counselling on students' academic performance has been positively established.

Another finding of this study was that students also identified that counselling services are very important for improving their academic performances. This is in line with the observation by Abubakar, Malan & Abdulaziz (2021) that students' knowledge of the impact of counselling services on their academic performance was evaluated to be positively very high. Moreover, Adeusi, Gesinde, Alo, Adejumo and Adeleke (2015) identified that guidance and counselling influences student's adjustment to school. Likewise, Shaterloo and Mohammadyari (2011) observed that students' perceived counselling as helping them to develop competencies in academic achievement, personal-social development and career planning. Furthermore, Tuchili and Ndhlovu (2016) observed that students acknowledged that guidance and counselling could be used to enhance positive behaviour in students and consequently shape their behaviour positively. To this end, this and other studies strongly showed that when counselling services are used effectively and efficiently used on students, positively improved upon their academic performance.

Finally, another finding of the study showed that both the teachers and the students believed that counselling services have a positive impact on academic performances. This finding is in line with others, notably the observation by Atsuwe & Albert (2018) that guidance and counselling programme have a positive impact on the academic performance of secondary school students. Likewise, Dabone, Graham and Fabian (2015) revealed that guidance and counselling services have a positive effect on students' academic achievements. In similar veins, Ibrahim, Bandi, Danyaya, Sahabi & Abubakar (2021), Bahago, Fadipe & Nene (2021), Dabone, Graham & Fabian (2015) indicated that students demonstrated good academic performance because of the positive impact of counselling services provided. Furthermore, the finding was corroborated by the study of Ali (2014) that showed a significant improvement in the academic performance of students who have received guidance and counseling services as compared to that of students who had not. To cap it, Kumfu's (2009) study indicated that the guidance and counselling coordinators'

roles such as vocational, career and personal counselling have a positive impact on the academic performance of the students. Also, guidance and counselling services in the schools showed that there is a positive impact on the students' academic performance and the molding of their character. These findings lent support to this study's finding and is an indication that counselling services played an impactful role in the improvement of students' academic performances.

## V. CONCLUSION

From the findings and discussions, it is convenient to conclude that counselling services are very important in improving students' academic performance as depicted by the way the teachers' and students' perceptions were positive in affirming that. Thus, it is very pertinent that the positive impact of the counselling services should be mined and utilized for the improvement of academic performance in the state.

## RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are given for further improvement:

- i. The state should employ more qualified and experienced counsellors that will partner with other staff in schools and be given all necessary support in the performance of their duties to ensure improving students' academic performance.
- ii. Students should be provided with enough opportunities to benefit from counselling services, thus to this end, the government and school authorities should encourage students to frequent counsellors to take advantage of the provided counselling services.
- iii. The available counsellors in the schools should work hard to meet the yearnings and aspirations of the students by improving counselling sensitization in the schools aimed at enlightening all on its academic, vocational and personal-social positive impacts.

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